January 4, 2008

This edition of the COD Processing Update will remain on the COD Web site until a new edition is posted. We will notify schools via a COD Web Message when a new edition has been posted.

Direct Loan Program

COD News

NEW!

Availability of EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0 (01/04/08)
Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the posting of EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0, on the Department's Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site. This release contains Global, Application Processing, and Packaging functionality for the 2008-2009 cycle.

In addition, the following EDExpress 2008-2009 documents are available on the FSAdownload Web site:

- Installation Guide for EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009
- EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0 Cover Letter
- EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0 Desk Reference
  (covers Global, Application Processing, and Packaging functionality) and Addendum (covers changes related to the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 [the HERA], Pub. L. 109-171, such as Academic Competitiveness Grant [ACG] and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant [National SMART Grant] processing)
- 2008-2009 Packaging Technical Reference

These documents contain important information regarding EDExpress 2008-2009 installation, functionality, and enhancements that you should review.

Note: At the time this software was prepared, the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriation had not been approved and the 2008-2009 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedule included in Release 1.0 was based on the current maximum Pell Grant award. Now that the appropriations bill has been enacted, we will update the Pell Grant Payment Schedule through a future release of EDExpress. If you use the EDExpress Packaging module to award Pell Grants, you will want to wait until the updated software is available.

For complete information about Release 1.0, refer to the January 3, 2008 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site.

G5 Phase I Implemented—Marked Improvement in G5 Web Site Performance (12/31/07)
As communicated in a December 17, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, the Department of Education (the Department) has implemented Phase 1 of G5, which replaces the GAPS e-Payments functionality that was

used by schools to draw down Campus-Based, Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) funds.

During the period December 17-28, 2007, performance issues with the G5 Web site affected users' ability to access the G5 system and/or execute transactions. As a result, payments may have been delayed one day.

The Department's technical experts have worked diligently to resolve the issues, and, as a result, there has been marked improvement in the performance of the G5 Web site. The Department will continue to closely monitor the Web site's performance and will inform users if there are any major impacts on performance in the future.

The Department sincerely regrets any inconvenience these issues caused users. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we worked to resolve them.

Additional information about G5 Web site (https://www.g5.gov/) registration, online training, and questions is provided below.

G5 Web Site Registration

All users will need to register before they can access the G5 Web site. To register, first determine your user status and then complete the applicable steps outlined below.

User Who Was Previously Registered for GAPS e-Payments Functionality

> Step 1: Go to the G5 Web site at https://www.g5.gov/.
>
> Step 2: Under the yellow "Login to G5" box, click on the "Existing e-Payments user? Register Here" link.
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User Who Was Not Previously Registered for GAPS e-Payments Functionality or G5

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> Step 1: Go to the G5 Web site at https://www.g5.gov/.
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> Step 2: In the blue menu bar at the top of the page, click on the "Help" link.

Step 3: Click on the "Launch Help – Internet Explorer" link and complete the training.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about G5, contact the G5/GAPS Hotline at 888/336-8930 or e-mail G5admin@ed.gov.

New TEACH Grant Program Question Will Be Added to 2008-2009 FAFSA on the Web (12/24/07)
The College Cost Reduction and Access Act (the CCRAA), Pub.L. 110-84, created the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program (TEACH Program). This program is effective beginning with the 2008-2009 Award Year and provides up to $4,000 a year in grant assistance to students who plan on becoming a teacher and meet certain specified requirements. If a student who receives a TEACH Grant does not complete the required teaching, the grant must be repaid as a Direct Unsubsidized Loan under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program.

Note: A Dear Colleague Letter that provides information on all of the provisions of the CCRAA, including the TEACH Grant Program, will be posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site as soon as it receives final clearance.

Federal Student Aid posted a December 21, 2007 Electronic Announcement on the IFAP Web site that is the first in a series of communications intended to focus on the operational implementation of the CCRAA changes that will affect the Central Processing System (CPS), Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System, and EDESuite. Federal Student Aid is very close to finalizing the operational changes that it must make to its Federal student aid processes and procedures to implement the provisions of the CCRAA, including the TEACH Grant Program for the 2008-2009 Award Year, and appreciates the community's patience as it completes this work. Forthcoming communications will fully explain the necessary changes and implementation schedule. All participants in the Federal student aid programs should refer to the IFAP Web site for applicable guidance and information.

In the December 21st Electronic Announcement, Federal Student Aid informs the community of a new question relating to the TEACH Grant Program that will be included on the 2008-2009 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). For 2008-2009, this question will only be on the FAFSA on the Web application and not on the paper FAFSA. The question is intended to assist in identifying potentially eligible TEACH Grant recipients and will be available on both the English and Spanish versions of FAFSA on the Web. Please refer to the December 21st Electronic Announcement for important information about the implementation of the new TEACH Grant Program question.

NEW!

Updating School Contact Information in the COD System (1/04/08)
Federal Student Aid wants to remind all schools and third party servicers that contact information in the Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System must be kept current. Contact information is extremely important for the COD School Relations Center. Of utmost importance are e-mail addresses and mailing addresses.

- The e-mail address for the Financial Aid Administrator is used to deliver time-sensitive materials and critical COD processing information to the school.

- For a Direct Loan school, correct mailing address information ensures that Direct Loan closeout letters are delivered timely and to the correct place.

Please ensure that all contact information is updated as needed.

Submitting Updates to School Contact Information

Depending on the type of information to be updated, a school must submit updates in one of the following two ways:

1. In accordance with 34 CFR 600.21, most changes must be reported using the Electronic Application for Approval to Participate in Federal Student Financial Aid Programs (E-App). This includes changes to the following information:

   - School name

   - School address (including any branches and locations)

   - Names of the President (or equivalent title), Chief Financial Officer (or equivalent title), and Financial Aid Administrator (or equivalent title)

   - Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for the above officials

   Once the E-App is processed, the COD Web site is updated within 24 hours. It may take longer if there is additional information required by the School Participation Team (formerly known as the Case Management and Oversight Division).

2. Two specific changes can **only** be made via the COD Web site. These are changes to the Direct Loan Officer contact information/mailing address and the Pell Grant Officer contact information/mailing address. To view and/or update the current contact information for these officers, complete the following steps:

   - Log in to the COD Web site.

   - From the School tab, select the "Financial Aid Contact" link (located under the School Information menu). The School Financial Aid Contact Information screen displays the current information for the school.

   - Update or add new contact information by clicking on the "Update" or "Add New" button in the heading for the officer to be updated.

   - Complete the new information and submit the changes.

   This information will be processed and updated immediately on the COD Web site.

An Electronic Announcement with this same information is posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. If you have any questions about updating your school's contact information, contact the COD School Relations Center.

Reports and Data Requests

NOTICES

This section contains important notices regarding reports and/or data requests. While we encourage you to review this section, note that some schools may not be impacted by the information presented below.

- Direct Loan Rebuild File—   Schools in need of this file should contact the COD School Relations Center.

Current Issues

Incorrect Occurrences of COD Edit 39 (12/12/07)
Federal Student Aid has discovered an issue with COD Edit 39 (Incorrect Award Amount) being returned incorrectly at the award level for some 2007-2008 Direct Subsidized Loan records submitted to the COD System. At this time, this situation is limited to schools that submit batches containing a subsidized award and an unsubsidized award for a student with the PreProfessionalCourseworkIndicator tag in the award set to "True".   In these cases, the COD System is incorrectly sending a rejected response for the subsidized award; however, the subsidized award is established on the COD System.

Federal Student Aid is working to resolve this issue and apologizes for any inconvenience it causes schools. An update on this issue will be provided after it has been resolved.

In the meantime, if a school believes that it has been affected by this issue, it should contact the COD School Relations Center at CODSupport@acs-inc.com.

ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant Programs

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NEW!

ACG and National SMART Grant Resources (1/04/08)
As a reminder, the Department of Education (the Department) has posted a number of Dear Colleague Letters and Electronic Announcements that communicate regulatory, policy, and operational information related to the implementation of the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) programs. In addition, Federal Student Aid has updated the 2006-2007 COD Technical Reference, the 2007-2008 COD Technical Reference, and posted the 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference. A school should refer to the communications posted on the Information for Financial

Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site and to the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references for complete information about the ACG and National SMART Grant programs.

More specifically, the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references cover all aspects of the operational implementation of the ACG and National SMART Grant programs. This includes information on the following key aspects of ACG and National SMART Grant processing:

- o Financial Award ID and Financial Award Number (Award Sequence Number)
  Volume II, Section 1 "Implementation Guide"

- o Citizenship and Student Level Code
  Volume II, Section 1 "Implementation Guide"

- o Message Classes
  Volume II, Section 2 "Message Classes"

- o Common Record Layout
  Volume II, Section 3 "Common Record Layout"

- o Reports Generated by COD System
  Volume VI, Section 8 "COD Reports"

- o Eligibility/Payment Reason and Rigorous High School Program Code for ACG
  Volume VI, Section 9 "Rigorous Secondary School Programs of Study, and Eligible Majors"

- o Major/Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code for National SMART Grant
  Volume VI, Section 9 "Rigorous Secondary School Programs of Study, and Eligible Majors"

If your school needs help locating information related to the operational implementation of the ACG and National SMART Grant programs, contact the COD School Relations Center.

Note for EDExpress Users: Volume III of the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 COD technical references provides additional guidance for schools that use EDExpress in combination with another system. If your school needs help locating information related to EDExpress, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 880/330-5947 or by e-mail at CPSSAIG@ed.gov.